

EXCERPTS FROM EDITORIALS COMMENTING ON THE McCARRAN  
ANTI-SUBVERSIVE BILL PASSED BY THE UNITED STATES SENATE

" . . . America is losing its sense of proportion where . . . communism is concerned . . . It is . . . dangerous to the traditional liberties of all Americans . . . It imposes methods on the FBI . . . which (it) has not asked for . . . Not all the senators who voted for the bill could have been unaware of its disadvantages . . . No man who voted against it can be accused of wanting to "coddle" Communists . . . The bill . . . is evidence that where communism is concerned, Americans are no longer able to judge an issue on its merits . . . Communism . . . cannot be . . . the yardstick by which we should measure all other questions . . . You cannot run a business that way . . . We doubt that you can run a country that way, either."

-Wilmington (Del.) Journal-Every Evening  
of September 13, 1950

- - - - -

"Anticommunism (has) proved stronger than Americanism . . . The McCarran Bill . . . will . . . hit certain distinctive American liberties that have been a source of pride and of strength to this country for a century and a half . . ."

-Washington (DC) Post  
of September 13, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . the McCarran bill . . . would penalize men for their opinions . . . we think it would help rather than hurt the Communists by blurring the distinction between them and loyal Americans . . . (It trespasses) upon the freedoms which are the wellsprings of American security . . ."

-Washington (DC) Post  
of September 8, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . we must . . . beware of endangering freedom ourselves by regulations that are too restrictive and unfair . . . the nation must not permit hysteria to govern it . . . ."

-The (Phoenix) Arizona Republic  
of August 31, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . Our cherished freedoms of assembly, of expression, of thought are intended to protect those who disagree as well as those who agree with us. They imply the right to be unpopular, to be wrong in beliefs and attitudes . . . A law may prevent a man from calling himself a Communist; it won't change his beliefs. And it is his belief and not a label which makes him a danger. No law can be strong enough to combat an idea; it can be overcome only by a better idea, a more

- 2 -

enduring principle . . . . We still do not need thought control in this country.

We do need more and better and straighter thinking."

-Chattanooga (Tenn.) Daily Times  
of August 21, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . Estes Kefauver was one of seven senators who voted against the bill . .  
. . It was not that the Tennessee senator hates Communism less but that he loves  
liberty more. . . . The anti-subversive bill . . . sets up . . conformity as the  
American pattern, though the Constitution guarantees just the opposite. The  
coming world struggle is between freedom for the individual in the democracies and  
enslavement of the human soul in the Communist dictator states. If we are not  
fighting for that, we are not fighting for anything. . . . (The bill) . . . clearly  
seeks to force conformity by intimidation . . . ."

-Chattanooga (Tenn.) Daily Times  
of September 14, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . . the most effective curb . . . is . . the substitute bill sponsored by  
Senator Kilgore . . . and supported by a group of Democrats among whom (is)  
Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee . . . the McCarran bill . . . permits the  
smearing of innocent persons for political reasons."

-Nashville (Tenn.) Tennessean  
of September 10, 1950

- - - - -

"Six Democratic senators (including Kefauver) . . . have come forward with a bill  
which really deals with the Communist problem forthrightly and vigorously . . .  
(It) is better than the Mundt-Ferguson-McCarran measures. . . . (These bills)  
could do more damage than good. They forge a weapon which, in the wrong hands,  
could smother almost any minority opposition to whoever happened to be in power."

-Christian Science Monitor  
of September 8, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . . The McCarran Bill (contains) provisions . . . (which), if enforced,  
would be dangerous to the tenets of liberty. . . (It) could be invoked to crush any  
minority group which did not see eye-to-eye with the party in power, and could  
stifle freedom of speech and of assembly. . ."

-Portland (Ore.) Press Herald  
of September 13, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . . the whole incident reveals how excess of zeal can sometimes be as damaging  
as the lack of it."

- 3 -

" . . . The anti-Communist bill . . . must arouse misgivings among thoughtful people. . . the way is open, as the bill now stands, for flagrant and wholesale abuse . . . With the election only a few weeks off, . . . (Congress) . . . is in no mood to weigh a spectacular anti-Communist proposal against its ill consequences for this nation's free institutions . . ."

-Baltimore (Md.) Sun  
of September 14, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . the fact that the bill embraces some good features does not alter the more important fact that it would impose infringements on the freedom . . . Americans have always held dear . . . "

-New York Times  
of September 14, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . the country needs . . . a better law than . . . the Senate bill would be . . . "

-(Scripps-Howard)  
New York World-Telegram and The Sun  
Memphis (Tenn.) Press-Scimitar  
of September 14, 1950  
(Denver, Colo.) Rocky Mountain News  
of September 15, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . (provisions of the McCarran Bill) . . . would do no injury to spies and saboteurs, but would do irreparable injury to rights of expression . . . They are so dangerous and corruptive that they outweigh all the commendable protections that the bill provides . . . "

-Washington (DC) Post  
of September 15, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . Kefauver, who was one of the sponsors of the Kilgore bill ("for clamping down on dangerous Communists overnight and putting them under immediate detention" . . . . voted against the final compromise measure on the grounds that it 'endangered many of the basic rights held dear by Americans.' He would go further than Senator McCarran in blocking spies and saboteurs, but he will not encourage legislation that seems destined to bring endless confusion and at the same time pave the way for possible persecution of good citizens. His steadfast stand for his convictions is a commendable demonstration of political courage.

"The country will not be apt to forget that it was due to the persistent demands of Senator Kefauver and others that the concentration camp provision was finally accepted after its initial defeat.

- 4 -

" . . . . liberties of those who are bent on undermining national liberty are not important. But the resolve to see that the Bill of Rights will always apply to good citizens is in strict accordance with the oath . . . to uphold and defend the Constitution.

"The idea of suppressing the overt act rather than trying to establish controls over thought is thoroughly American . . . "

-Nashville (Tenn.) Tennessean  
of September 14, 1950

- - - - -

"Senator Estes Kefauver . . . courageously voted against the McCarran bill . . . He has shown the people of America that there are still a few men . . who have the intestinal fortitude to consider the welfare of their country above the political whims. . . .

"The McCarran Bill . . . is in direct violation to our Bill of Rights which guarantees the RULE of the Majority with the PROTECTION of the Minority.

(It) will provide for the PERSECUTION of a Minority Party. If this persecution is permitted, then the members of any other Minority Party, whether it be Democrat, Republican or Communist, can never be assured they will not at some time be the recipient of a similar persecution . . . entirely possible if the Bill passes and the courts rule it is Constitutional,

". . . The only way to fight (Communism) is to educate . . . people and . . show them the advantages of Free Enterprise. . ."

-The Sweetwater (Tenn.) Valley News  
of September 14, 1950

- - - - -

"While the purpose of the bill is praiseworthy, its catch-all provisions are so broad that they could be used to deny freedom to innocent Americans as well as Communists . . . . It should not be necessary to stifle the freedom of all except the most orthodox in order to get at the real enemy. . . The McCarran bill should get the veto . . . then Congress, after careful deliberation should adopt a measure providing the reasonable curbs that are needed."

-(Little Rock) Arkansas Gazette  
of September 15, 1950

- - - - -

" . . . . anti-subversive legislation . . whose dangers exceed its virtues . . . .  
. . we believe we have good reason to be afraid . . the legislation could be used against . . . even the Democrats, if the Republicans get into power and decide the Democratic Party is un-American in practice. . . .

". . . it is doubtful if the legislation could be made workable.

- 5 -

"It is quite probable that each case . . would be dragged through the courts - for as many as four years. . .

". . neither Alger Hiss, Judith Coplon nor Harry Gold . . . could have been convicted under this legislation. The danger of espionage and sabotage . . . are the greatest dangers Communism offers in this country. This law would not eliminate or punish those actions satisfactorily.

". . this bill . . would harass the Communist party and its adherents but there is no assurance that it would not harass the rest of us . . . The Justice Department thinks this legislation is unconstitutional. J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI does not like it . . . .

"There are many necessary portions of the legislation . . . It is too bad they are so badly outweighed and outclassed by the bad portions. . . . we should be able to get along without it . . until Congress comes to its senses rather than subject the United States to unfair and dangerous law."

-The Denver Post  
of September 14, 1950

- - - - -

"Statements by two of the seven Senators who voted against the McCarran-Mundt-Ferguson-Nixon-Wood thought control bill deserve to be read and re-read by their colleagues and by the American people.

"Senator KEEFAUVER, of Tennessee, said:

"I could not live with my conscience if I gave my approval to a bill which does violence to the Constitution, to the Bill of Rights, and which I think destroys many of those freedoms which make America the great land of the free."

. . .

"There are times when a few words count for more than overwhelming numbers on the other side. This is such a time . . . ."

-St. Louis (Mo.) Post-Dispatch  
of September 14, 1950

- - - - -